

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Honorable John L. Capell, III

Montgomery County Administration and Courthouse Annex
P.O. Box 1667
Montgomery, AL 36102
(334) 832-2505

Tarilton E. Benton
William T. Wright
Amy Wanous
Sharon Parker
Cynthia Hardy
Jan Byrne
Carlinda Purcell
Bruce R. Howell
James Martin
Ellen Brooks

Larry Dixon
Quinton Ross
Dick Brewbaker
David Grimes
Alvin Holmes
John Knight
Jay Love
Thad McClammy
Todd Strange
D.T. Marshall

Beverly Wise
Regina Moorer
Brenda Mitchell
Charles Colvin
Cynthia Tyner Lamar
Jane Ferguson
Walter P. White
Debbie Williams



Council Priorities

1. Local inpatient mental health crisis beds and substance abuse inpatient treatment is available to all children in need.

Advocate and support efforts to develop local inpatient mental health crisis beds and substance abuse inpatient.

2. All children will be free of domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual abuse.

Promote the awareness of child development from infancy to adolescence, promote positive youth development, and promote positive parental involvement and encourage development of parenting skills.

3. Affordable quality childcare is available to all children.

Promote the availability of quality, affordable child care for all children.

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county

Early Care Education

Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Raise the awareness of the importance of brain development and early child development

Action Steps

- 1) Participate in United Way "Born Learning" program.
- 2) Support the development of ARMS as a tool to network with other agencies and support the efforts of Alabama Partnership for Children to highlight the importance of early care and education.

All children are actively learning in all developmental areas and will be prepared to succeed in school

Action Steps

- 1) Promote awareness of the need for parenting education.
- 2) Enhance funding opportunities to increase the availability of parent education and resources.
- 3) Increase child care provider awareness of the availability of training/education opportunities and resources.
- 4) Increase the number of child care providers/Early Care Education (ECE) teachers who have Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials, two (2) and four (4) year degrees.

Increase the availability of affordable quality child care to include families of children with special health care needs, disabilities, and diverse populations

Action Steps

- 1) Advocate for increased funding, including child care subsidies, for affordable, accessible quality child care to include before and after school care.
- 2) Form alliance with business community to assist in providing funds to supplement child care cost.
- 3) Promote the need to fund child care resource and referral services to assist families in locating quality child care and maintaining child care related data.

Economic Security

Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Develop a community support system for assisting young women in finding permanent employment

Action Steps

- 1) Increase availability of literacy and GED programs.
- 2) Increase access to life skills and job skills training.

- 3) Advocate for transportation infrastructure.

Develop gender specific programs for assisting young men in finding permanent employment

Action Steps

- 1) Increase availability of literacy and GED programs.
- 2) Increase access to life skills and job skills training.
- 3) Advocate for transportation infrastructure.
- 4) Promote self-awareness of the importance of fathers in the life of his children.

Promote wise life choices among adolescent youth

Action Steps

- 1) Teach health relationship skills in middle/junior high schools.
- 2) Ensure programs address the impact of (a) early marriage, (b) high school dropout, (c) out-of-wedlock births.

Education

Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Increase graduation rates

Action Steps

- 1) Identify and intervene with at-risk students.
- 2) Encourage schools to aggressively monitor absenteeism (attendance follow-up and truancy prevention).

Enhancing non-traditional education

Action Steps

- 1) Reintroduce programs such as vocational education.
- 2) Improve existing GED and Dropout Recovery Programs.
- 3) Provide for expelled students (Increase opportunities for return, implement mandatory placement referrals for permanently or long-term expelled students).

Changing attitudes about public education

Action Steps

- 1) Mount campaign emphasizing positive aspects of public schools to combat negative perceptions.
- 2) Develop and implement a public awareness campaign that reveals consequences of inadequately funding public education (e.g. costs of jails, prisons, law enforcement, and welfare).
- 3) Increase Parental Involvement.

Health

Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Promote the development of local mental health inpatient beds

Action Steps

- 1) Children's Policy Council establishes a "working group" to develop a game plan for funding.

Preventing/reducing youth risk behaviors by promoting positive youth development

Action Steps

- 1) Committed agencies and parties form a coalition.

Parent Involvement Skills

Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Parents need to be involved in all aspects of their children's lives

Action Steps

- 1) Develop home-based programs to identify family strengths and needs.
- 2) Identify parenting resource list and provide families with the information.

Encourage parents who need to be motivated to assume responsibility for their children and who need to develop skills to parent effectively

Action Steps

- 1) Encourage the development of parent enrichment programs in schools.
- 2) Develop and distribute a parenting resource list.

Safety

Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Reestablish the Gang Task Force

Action Steps

- 1) Revise the Gang Task Force with the District Attorney.
- 2) Identify issues/challenges.
- 3) Develop a prevention plan.

Develop a joint sexual victims unit with the Montgomery Police Department and the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office

Action Steps

- 1) Develop protocol with Montgomery Police Department, Montgomery sheriff's Department, Child Protect, District Attorney, and Montgomery County Department of Human Resources.
- 2) Implement protocol.
- 3) Collect valid appropriate data.

Promote the development of local Montgomery County acute inpatient mental health beds

Action Steps

- 1) Promote local appropriate availability/placement mental health beds.
- 2) Address funding issues.
- 3) Encourage the development of a pilot program of three (3) mental health inpatient crisis beds at a local hospital.

Policy Recommendations

- Legislation needed to provide state funding for children's services.
- Funding should be made available for affordable child-care for all children. Increase funding for children with special needs (disabilities).
- Health Department, Department of Human Resources, Department of Children's Affairs, Department of Rehabilitation Services, and other children's agencies collaborate to create and implement a system of developmental screening of all children by age 3.
- Department of Education use PSA (Public Service Announcement) to advertise available GED and family literacy sites.
- Legislation is needed to clarify age definitions of child, minor, adult.
- Examine laws regarding CHINS (Children in Need of Supervision) and prohibit CHINS from being committed to the Department of Youth Services.
- Encourage state agencies to support ARMS (Alabama Resource Management System) and encourage its use and financial support.
- Advocate that the legislature mandates that there be at least three (3) mental health beds for each of the mental health catchments areas.